



Reform of the National Curriculum in England

Update report to Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

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National Curriculum consultation Feb – April 2013

Key similarities and changes proposed

- Definition of the ‘school curriculum’
- All subjects retained at all 4 key stages
- Foreign languages at Key Stage 2
- ICT to become Computing
- Removal of Attainment target levels and descriptors

Reform of GCSEs

- Decisions regarding Key Stage 4 qualification consultation

Secondary accountability consultation

- Additional accountability measures for secondary schools
- Consultation ends Wednesday 1 May 2013

Statutory basis

The new curriculum is still governed by overarching legislation which requires schools to offer a **balanced** and **broadly based curriculum** that:

- **promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and**
- **prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.**

Section 78 of the 2002 Education Act:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/78>

National Curriculum proposed Aims

- provides pupils with an introduction to the **core knowledge** they need to be educated citizens
- introduces pupils to **the best that has been thought and said**
- helps engender an appreciation of **human creativity and achievement**
- provides an outline of core knowledge around which **teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons**

National Curriculum consultation framework document
<https://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/n/national%20curriculum%20consultation%20-%20framework%20document.pdf>

The *School* curriculum is....

- Core subjects plus
 - statutory subjects such as RE
 - non-statutory subjects such as PSHE
 - any other subject agreed by the school
 - non-statutory guidance that must be followed
- Your school curriculum – published by academic year
 - more detailed than the National Curriculum
 - making clear what children are taught
 - setting high expectations
 - set out by academic year
- **(in other words ‘schemes of work’)**

Example of subject aims: English

- *Purpose of study*

Through being taught to write and speak fluently, pupils learn to communicate their ideas and emotions to others; through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them

- *Aims* – ensure all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often for both pleasure and information
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

Example of subject aims: PE

The National Curriculum for physical education aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- are physically active for sustained periods of time
- engage in competitive sports and activities
- lead healthy, active lives.

(Swimming)

- The Government is committed to ensuring swimming takes place in schools. Swimming is a compulsory part of the current National Curriculum for PE and will remain a compulsory part of the new curriculum when it is released.
- Whilst schools must ensure they have sufficient access to suitable facilities for swimming lessons, it is not a requirement that they have pool on site as the school is best placed to assess what facilities best fulfil its needs.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 (age 11), pupils should be taught to swim unaided for a distance of at least 25 metres, using recognised strokes, on their front and back, and demonstrate an understanding of water safety). It is up to primary schools to decide when, and at what point they wish to teach this.
- When pupils are in KS2 years (Years 3-6), swimming activities and water safety must be chosen as one of their areas of activity unless pupils have completed the full KS2 teaching requirements (in relation to swimming activities and water safety) during their Key Stage 1 years (Reception and Years 1 & 2).
- Within the law, parents do not have a right to withdraw their children from this statutory element of the National Curriculum.

**Schools can ask for a voluntary contribution towards swimming trips as long as they make it clear that it is voluntary. Schools must not exclude any child because of unwillingness/inability to pay.

Attainment Targets now consist of one identical statement for each subject as stated below:

‘By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study’.

Primary programmes of study – key changes

Core subjects of English, mathematics, science

- 2-to-3 page introduction with purpose of study, aims and spoken language
- Detailed Programmes of Study set out by academic year or 2 years, with notes & guidance
- Clearer link between what children are taught and what is assessed
- Only legal requirement is to teach children before end of key stage

Foundation subjects:

- art & design, computing, design & technology, geography, history, ICT, music, PE and, at KS2, foreign languages
- Much shorter National Curriculum set out by key stage
- Focus on essentials, allowing schools maximum level of innovation

Primary English

Emphasis on

- **systematic phonics** to ensure every child can decode
- taking **pleasure from reading** through plenty of listening and discussion from Key Stage 1 to build vocabulary and strengthen comprehension
- **Reading whole books**
- **Competence *and* effectiveness in writing**, so grammar, spelling and punctuation are emphasised as well as audience and purpose

Plus:

- **Higher expectation** in all the above
- **Spoken language**, listening and references to drama **integrated**
- Notes and guidance integrated
- **Glossary for teachers** provided to support understanding of 'new' terms in grammar

Primary mathematics

- higher expectation overall - benchmarked against age-related expectations in other nations
- progression shown year-by-year – but for teachers to set out their year-by-year approach in their school curriculum
- conceptual development of number addressed in detail, especially in relation to arithmetic and proportionality
- fewer things in more depth in primary so data is less prominent and probability not introduced until Key Stage 3
- all pupils expected to build firm foundations and not be accelerated to content expected in secondary school

Secondary programmes of study – key changes

- 12 subjects at KS3 – English, mathematics, science, art and design, design & technology, geography, history, ICT, music, PE, modern foreign languages & citizenship
- Literacy and mathematics across the curriculum
- 6 subjects at KS4 - English, mathematics, science, ICT, PE & citizenship (separate statutory consultation)
- KS4 entitlement areas – the arts, the humanities, design & technology, modern foreign languages
- English, maths and science Programmes of Study, specified by Key Stage only, from 6 to 18 pages long
- Foundation subject Programmes of Study as brief as for KS1 & 2

Primary assessment & accountability

- The current system of **NC levels** and level descriptors will disappear *from the end of this term* and will **not be replaced**.
- A **form of grading** will be developed for reporting **pupil attainment** and as a focus for **progress**.
- **Statutory consultation** on how this will work, including end of key stage testing and teacher assessment, reporting and floor standards

GCSE reforms

- Main substantive change is that we are **not implementing market reforms**
- The **GCSE title maintained**
- **New GCSEs remain accessible** to the same proportion of pupils.
- **Pass level** to reflect that of high-performing jurisdictions
- **Linear**, no **tiers**, minimal **controlled assessment**, minimal **exam aids** and a new **grading scale**
- **New GCSEs** in English literature and language, mathematics, sciences, geography and history for first teaching from 2015.

Secondary accountability reforms

Remove existing 5 A*-C measure and replace with:

1. a **threshold attainment** measure showing the percentage of pupils in each school achieving a pass in English and mathematics; and
2. a **progress measure based on pupils' average scores across a suite of 8 qualifications**. The 8 qualifications counted in the measure will be English, mathematics, 3 further English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects, and 3 other high value qualifications – EBacc, other academic, arts or vocational

A levels and vocational qualifications

- A level announcement – letter from Secretary of State to Ofqual
 - 2 year linear qualifications
 - University input to ensure A levels are robust and rigorous
 - Russell Group to create an advisory body
 - AS level to be retained but redesigned as standalone qualification
- Decisions to be announced September

Looking ahead

- **September 2013**
 - Final National Curriculum published
 - Proposed disapplication of current curriculum from September 2013
- **September 2014** – First teaching of National Curriculum
- **September 2015** – First teaching of new English, mathematics, sciences GCSEs
- **May 2016** – First new Key Stage 1 and 2 national assessments

‘Sector led’ implementation will benefit CBC’s diverse school system

- **School to school support:** Teaching Schools, NLEs and LLEs to support introduction of the new curriculum;
- **Teacher training:** Teaching Agency to align training from September 2013 with curriculum changes and to explore provision of subject specialists;
- **CPD:** Existing government-funded CPD programmes in mathematics and science will be adapted to support the delivery of the new Programmes of Study in these subjects (from September 2013).

Council's curricular duties

- To run the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
- To agree and maintain the local agreed syllabus for religious education
- (In their inspections of Councils' arrangements to support school improvement, Ofsted will inspect the degree to which Councils support physical activity and sport).